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Washington Merry-Go-Round

by JACK ANDERSON

WASHINGTON — The Young Air Force psychiatrist who wrote the eerily prophetic "President Nixon's Psychiatric Profile" has complained that he is being so harassed by his Air Force bosses he wants to resign.

Maj. Eli Chesen, chief of the Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., mental health clinic, has confided to congressmen that he has been threatened with court martial, that his patriotism has been questioned and that his integrity has been assaulted — all because of the book.

So serious is the alleged mistreatment, we have learned, that 13 plucky doctors at the Nellis base hospital have written Congress and the Air Force asking for a "full investigation" of Chesen's charges.

Chesen wrote his book while he was on inactive reserve. It was based on Nixon's speeches, biographies, televised appearances and writings. From this gigantic heap of material, Chesen shrewdly drew the conclusion that Nixon never would buckle from the most critical policy crises, but might disintegrate from personal problems.

The Air Force major finished his book almost a year ago when the world still believed in the exuberent Nixon of the 1972 election period. But Chesen accurately predicted that Nixon might become the present-day recluse of San Clemente, a lonely, tortured, insecure man.

"It is in the personal context that I am most concern about Nixon's stability under stress," wrote Chesen with discomforting foresight. "The threat of world war poses less of a vexation for Nixon that the outcome of Watergate..."

Indeed, Nixon's physician Dr. Walter Tkach might well have been quoting from Chesen's uncanny forecast when he said a few days ago that Nixon was "ravaged" and broken in spirit. But Chesen's Air Force bosses apparently are not interested in the accuracy of the young psychiatrist's star-gazing about Nixon.

Even before Chesen came on active Air Force duty last February, he ran into trouble, he confided in a letter to several congressmen, including Rep. Wiley Mayne, R-Iowa. Chesen said his future commander allegedly told aides, "If Doctor Chesen gets even a step out of line, he will be court-martialed."

Within days after he got to Nellis, he said, an Air Force general at a small dinner party questioned him about whether his father was born in Russia. "His questions to me indicated a surprising personal knowledge of my background, including minor details about my wife's medical problems," said Chesen.

At the base, he said, a special file was kept on him and was "shown to some of my colleagues in a way to discredit my reputation...My commanding officer has personally...informed the defense counsel on (a) case that my opinion was not reliable in view of my past performance as an author of a book of which he disapproves."

Chesen, who had settled with his family in Nellis, also intermittently faced threats of reassignment. As a result of all this, he said, he wanted a release from active duty, even though his time is not up until 1976.

FOOTNOTE: Chesen refused comment, saying "I could get court-martialed." An Air Force spokesman said a preliminary inquiry has produced no evidence of harassment, but the Air Force, he told us, has begun a thorough investigation.

POWER PLAY: The aerospace industry, patent lobby, Commerce Department and four powerful congressmen have joined to turn Project Independence into a billion-dollar milk cow for big business.

The $20 billion Project Independence bill is designed to free the United States of foreign energy dependency by 1985. Sens. Phil Hart, D-Mich., Russell Long, D-La., and Gaylord Nelson, D-Wis., wrote in an amendment to make sure the valuable patents and other data developed with taxpayers' money remain in the hands of the taxpayers.

The House Interior Committee weakened the amendment slightly, but still kept in some taxpayer protection, and this measure was even backed by such giants as General Electric and Texas Gas Transmission. Ralph Nader and the Justice Department also approved it.

Now, however, Reps. Mike McCormack, D-Wash., Don Fuqua, D-Fla., Chet Holifield, D-Calif., and Craig Hosmer, R-Calif., have tried to stack the bill to make it easier for government friends of Big Oil to turn the people's patent profits over to industry.

Quietly assisting in the attempted brigandage have been Assistant Commerce Secretary Betsy Ancker-Johnson, a former aerospace official, and federal energy czar John Sawhill. Patent lawyers and the aerospace industry also are part of the wrecking crew.

MR. CLEAN: Rep. Bert Podell, D-N.Y., has a particularly bitter taste in his mouth as he stands trial in New York on federal charges of conspiracy, bribery and perjury. His primary opponent, who beat him with a "Mr. Clean" campaign is himself under investigation by the Kings County prosecutor.

The "Mr. Clean" in question is Steven Solarz, accused by a former employe of dipping into employe's paychecks while he was a New York state assemblyman. Solarz told us he has heard of the charges, but categorically denied them, saying they are part of the disgruntled employe's "vendetta" against him.